



**The Day of the Lord
Know Jesus? No Day of the Lord for You!
Don't Know Jesus? Too Bad!
1 Thessalonians 5:1-11
Luke 21:34-36**

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The folks there in Thessalonica have had their question answered about the dead in Christ and now they know they won't miss a thing.

But what is all this about the Day of the Lord? "For whatever reason, the Thessalonian congregation was concerned about the timing of the day of the Lord. Essentially the Thessalonians wanted to know when the day of the Lord would come." (Aernie and Hartley 2018, 111)



You know what, we have the same question they had? We are currently living in what the Bible calls, the times of the gentiles. In fact, Jesus Himself (Luke 21:24) made a statement concerning this time of the gentiles including evidence that we are in it and a definitive statement of when it will eventually end.

It all has to do with Jerusalem, how the nations treat it and the rescue of His people who have prayed (Hosea 5:15, Zechariah 13:9) for rescue when He returns as the avenger of blood as Armageddon rages and the beast attempts to achieve the genocide of all Jews worldwide (Zechariah 14, Revelation 19). Let's examine this term, the Day of the Lord.

As believers in Christ, the scriptures are very clear that we who believe today, prior to His return for the church, also known as the rapture of the Church, will not be subjected to the Day of the Lord. We also know it is not just a day but a multi-year time period.

Paul has just gone through great lengths to make sure the church in Thessalonica knows this.

Joel used an invasion of locusts as his example of what the Day would be like. Zephaniah used the Babylonians. Types of the day have occurred in the history of Israel and Judah. But the types are nothing like what the actual Day will be like.

Luke 21:34–36

"But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life, and **that Day** come on you unexpectedly. **For it will come as a snare on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man.**" (NKJV)

Jesus references the upcoming harpazo here, "worthy to escape" and He also points out that the Day of the Lord is inescapable for those who are still here on earth. If you are left behind, you will endure the Day of the Lord.

1 Thessalonians 5:1–11

"Now as to the periods and times, brothers and sisters, you have no need of anything to be written to you. **For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord is coming just like a thief in the night. While they are saying, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction will come upon them like labor pains upon a pregnant woman, and they will not escape. But you, brothers and sisters, are not in darkness**, so that the day would overtake you like a thief; for you are all sons of light and sons of day. We are not of night nor of darkness; so then, let's not sleep as others do, but let's be alert and sober. **For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who are drunk, get drunk at night. But since we are of the day, let's be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet, the hope of salvation. For God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep, we will live together with Him.** Therefore, encourage one another and build one another up, just as you also are doing." (NASB 2020)

Here is the headline, as believers, we know this is coming. We are looking for it and praying for it to come.

Matthew 6:9–13

"Pray, then, in this way: 'Our Father, who is in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. **Your kingdom come. Your will be done, On earth as it is in heaven.** Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil.'" (NASB 2020)



Many pray this verse every day, and for those who do, they are praying for the Day of the Lord to come and for God to judge the world. When we say Maranatha, or “come quickly Lord Jesus,” we are saying the same thing. Only, we are expecting this. Those who do not know Jesus, they are not.

Paul and Silas have already warmed us up to the idea of Jesus, in fulfilling His promise made in John 14:1-3, of removing His church before the wrath of God falls on this planet. They provided a heads up back earlier in 1 Thessalonians.

1 Thessalonians 1:10

“and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, that is, **Jesus who rescues us from the wrath to come.**” (NASB 2020)

Following the catching away of the saints there will come upon this world the darkest period it has ever known—that which is designated in many places in the Old Testament as the “day of the Lord;” and also the “time of trouble,” or “great tribulation,” as it is called in both the Old and New Testaments. (Ironsides 1947, 53-54)

This was a topic that Paul and Silas had indeed taught to the church in Thessalonica. His opening phrase shows us that this is indeed something which has already been taught.

Luke 21:34–36

“**But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that Day come on you unexpectedly. For it will come as a snare on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth.** Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man.” (NKJV)

Jesus made this warning rather consistently. Because He knew there would be many, as we see today, who busy with the flesh and ignoring the signs screaming all around them.

The periods and times that are being discussed here have nothing to do with the “when Jesus is coming for His church,” but “when Jesus is coming to establish His kingdom here on earth.”

Jesus Himself gave us a listing of what some of those signs would be in Matthew 24. They are not signs of when the rapture will take place. Whenever we try to combine the two, all we will do is get confused. The disciples were interested in the topic; they wanted to know what the periods and times were. They had asked in Matthew 24 and in Acts, they asked again.

Even though they had spent three years with Jesus, they had been impacted by the general belief of the day that Messiah would conquer the gentiles, kick out the Romans, and recover the Davidic Kingdom and do so right now. Some still do today such as the Sanhedrin and the Noahides. But Jesus went to the cross. Peter attempted to start the messianic revolution, and all he did was show he missed range day and only removed Malchus' ear, not his head.

Fast forward another 40 days or so, and Jesus is preparing to ascend in preparation for what will take place, as promised, on Pentecost. The giving of the Holy Spirit.

One more time they want to know, is it now? And one more time, because next time the Holy Spirit will show them, He says no.



Acts 1:6–8

“So when they had come together, they asked him, “Lord, are you restoring the kingdom to Israel at this time?” He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. **But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come on you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.**”” (CSB)

That’s clear. Our job is to be about the business of being His witnesses all across the planet. The disciples knew what the OT taught about the Day of the Lord. It is a major theme of prophecy and cannot possibly begin until the church is removed.

Paul and Silas here in verse 1 are letting us know that there is nothing more to learn about the timing of the end. We already have it all, and we do.

Our job is the same as theirs and the same as the disciples, simply be ready all the time and occupy. Be about the business that Jesus has called to us to. That business is making disciples.

As believers, we do know about the warning signs He has given about the Day. We know how close it truly is and that the shadows of events during that time are already falling onto this day and age.

Zephaniah 1:14

“The great day of the LORD is near, near and rapidly approaching. Listen, the day of the LORD— then the warrior’s cry is bitter.” (CSB)

Zephaniah warned the people of Jerusalem, who had turned away from the Lord, that they would see a type of the day of the Lord when Babylon would take the city. In verse 18 though, the Lord moves to the future and the future Day of the Lord.

Zephaniah 1:17–18

“I will bring distress on mankind So that they will walk like those who are blind, Because they have sinned against the LORD; And their blood will be poured out like dust, And their flesh like dung. **Neither their silver nor their gold Will be able to save them On the day of the LORD’S anger; And all the earth will be devoured By the fire of His jealousy, For He will make a complete end, Indeed a horrifying one, Of all the inhabitants of the earth.**” (NASB 2020)

And about the earth dwellers we read about in Revelation. Zephaniah used a specific word, mankind, humans. Why?

“I will bring distress” means “to cause trouble, bring to dire straits,” but it is also possible to see here a play on the word *nšr*, “besieged” (cf. Isa 1:8). (Berlin 2008, 90)

Note who is the object of the wrath of God, mankind. The word in the Hebrew means human beings “and is often used to distinguish humans from non-humans. Its usage is somewhat strange here.” (Berlin 2008, 90)

Here in Zephaniah, in a discussion on the Day of the Lord, the Lord uses words that state He will besiege “human beings.” As we have seen in our study of Revelation, it will be a unique time. There will be humans, augmented humans, cybernetically enhanced humans, genetically enhanced proto-humans, Nephilim, demons, and fallen angels all showing up at Armageddon. Is there a reason why the Lord focuses just on the humans? Are they the only ones who still have a chance to experience God’s grace and as such the only ones who would feel distressed?

At the very least, it points to this being a global event.



But those who are distressed, and that would not include the remnant or any remaining Tribulation saints, would encounter what is going on and walk around oblivious, blind to what it all means. Just as we see reflected in Revelation 16 and the non-repentance in the face of increasingly severe judgment. They are not being guided by the Lord, unlike those who are the remnant and are Tribulation believers. Their blindness is due to their sin which they refuse to repent of.

Again, this warning is for humans only as outlined for us at the beginning of the verse. There may not be many left at the end.

We tend to categorize our sin, God doesn't. Here, "humans may categorize their sins into the serious, the mediocre, and the insignificant. To Zephaniah (see James 2:10–11) the mere fact of sin excited and merited the whole weight of divine rage. The simple statement "they have sinned" is sufficient." (Motyer 2009, 924)

The Day of the Lord is all about judgment, the wrath of God on fallen mankind and it cannot start until we, the church, leaves.

David Olander tells us "Once the church is raptured, all future events concerning the day of the Lord will begin to unfold. These future events concern Israel, the nations of the world, the angelic realm, effectively the entire creation, but not the church. Once the church is removed nothing will be spared from His coming wrath. This is extremely significant, for until the rapture of the church the end time events are completely on hold especially all that is related to the day of the Lord." (Olander 2009, 34)

How do we know that? Simple. A review of the book of Revelation shows the first three chapters being all about the church, until John is told to "come up here." Dr. Fruchtenbaum points a few things out for us.

"There is no biblical passage that discusses the Tribulation in which the Church is mentioned. The fact that saints are found in the Tribulation does not prove that the Church is there any more than the existence of saints in the Old Testament proves that the Church was there. It has already been shown that the Church began on Pentecost with the baptizing ministry of the Holy Spirit.

Thus, Old Testament saints are not part of the Church. In the same way, the existence of saints in the Tribulation does not prove that the Church is there either; not even once are they called the Church. That the Church, as such, is never mentioned in any passage dealing with the Tribulation is especially evident and significant in the Book of the Revelation. The Church is clearly found in chapters 1–3, which deal with the events prior to the Tribulation. Later, the Church is found in chapters 19–22, which deal with events after the Tribulation. But in chapters 6–18, which deal with the Tribulation period itself, not even once is the Church mentioned. This is most unusual in light of the prominence of the Church in those chapters dealing with events prior to and events after the Tribulation. Outside of the Book of Revelation, the fact remains that in no passage dealing with the Tribulation is the Church mentioned." (Fruchtenbaum 1983, 11)

Joel tells us more about the Day of the Lord which does not begin until after we are gone.

Joel 1:15

"Woe for the day! For the day of the LORD is near, And it will come as destruction from the Almighty." (NASB 2020)

When we see this term, the Day of the Lord, used, we realize that the idea "is that this is Gods' time. Man has his "day," and the LORD has His day. In the ultimate sense, the day of the LORD is fulfilled with(sic) Jesus judges the earth and returns in glory. In a lesser sense, a time of judgment as Judah experienced with the locusts and drought is also an example of the day of the LORD." (Guzik 2000, Joe 1:15-20)



1 Thessalonians 5:2–3

“For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord is coming just like a thief in the night. While they are saying, “Peace and safety!” then sudden destruction will come upon them like labor pains upon a pregnant woman, and they will not escape.” (NASB 2020)

As believers, we are not in the dark. Jesus personally promised us that with the Holy Spirit, none of this will be a surprise to us.

John 16:13

“The Spirit shows what is true and will come and guide you into the full truth. The Spirit doesn’t speak on his own. He will tell you only what he has heard from me, and he will let you know what is going to happen.” (CEV)

Our hope is this, that at any point of the day or night, our Lord Jesus Christ will come for us. He promised to “And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.” (John 14:3, ESV)

When Jesus removes His body, the church from this planet, that clears the way for the Day of the Lord to begin.

The Thessalonian church understood this to be the case. Paul made it clear to them that they would not be subjected to the wrath of God. Their confusion was making connections that did not exist between ordinary persecution from the world and the wrath of God connected with the Day of the Lord.

We tend to also conflate current events as well into something they are not, but Paul pointed out to us making it clear that the Day of the Lord will not start as long as the church is still here.

When the rapture occurs upsetting life as it is here on planet earth, it will be totally, except for those of us looking for it, a surprise.

Jesus discusses this in Matthew 24:38-39.

Paul tells the believers in Thessalonica that none of this will take them by surprise. They are looking for Jesus to come and take them. Their loved ones who have died and knew the Lord won’t miss out, and they won’t either. It will not come as a shock to them nor will it take place and they find themselves still here. Because, just as he already said earlier in the letter, it is “...Jesus who rescues us from the wrath to come.” (1 Thessalonians 1:10b, NASB 2020)

This is a definitive promise to them and to us that our Lord will deliver us from the Tribulation by removing us from this planet before it ever takes place, and it will come as a shock to the world.

1 Thessalonians 5:4–6

“But you, brothers and sisters, are not in darkness, so that the day would overtake you like a thief; for you are all sons of light and sons of day. We are not of night nor of darkness; so then, let’s not sleep as others do, but let’s be alert and sober.” (NASB 2020)

The Holy Spirit made it clear to me that I, as your Pastor, must be about the business of making you like the people of Issachar. “...men who understood the times, with knowledge of what Israel should do...” (1 Chronicles 12:32b, NASB 2020)

See, we study prophecy and we know things.



Here is what Paul and Silas have been saying, distilled down to the basics.

- The rapture of the church from 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 is joy and life for those of us who know Jesus.
- But the Day of the Lord begins once that event takes place and 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11 means horror and destruction for those left behind.

There is no peace and safety apart from Jesus. But Satan wants us to think it is possible with the right political leader and the right military force. That is deception. For example, the motto for SAC was "Peace is our profession." In other words, we ensure peace with MAD. That is the world's version.

Paul gives us the wake-up call here letting us know that we are not to be sucked into this idea. We are not to be sucked into the idea of the world's version of peace or the world's version of security. We are not to be deceived that we can turn any nation back to the Lord, since that gives credence to the false presumption that they ever were a nation following the Lord to begin with. They weren't. We are not to be deceived that we can obtain all of this here right now by exercising dominion over the political process, the law and the culture. Satan already has examples of that for us globally in Islamic sharia law-based nations so we can see how well that works. The only thing that will work is King Jesus.

Let's pray.

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